

The first is the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 part 5 that obliges teachers and lecturers “to have due regard” to the need to “prevent” their students being drawn into terrorism. In practice this means reporting on young people who have expressed views against the status quo and in favour of the rights of Palestinians, including those still under siege in Gaza. The National Union of Teachers has argued if “British values” mean anything it should be the promotion of tolerance, democracy and engaging with young people about equality, human rights and inclusion in a positive and pro-active way - not reporting them to the police. **As NUT junior vice president Kiri Tunks who will be speaking at the meeting has said:** “Prevent is meant to keep our children safe but the way it is being implemented is shutting down debate, making our children vulnerable and stirring the flames of racist hate.”



The second legal device is the “Putting a stop to public procurement boycotts” policy. Here the government has tried to stop local councils adopting ethical procurement policies, particularly in relation to companies that assist the Israeli government in increasing illegal settlements in the West Bank and maintaining its Apartheid regime. Israel is in perpetual breach of international law. The illegal occupation is a military occupation: since 2000, Israel has killed more than 9,000 Palestinians. This includes almost 2,000 children. Even the Foreign Office recognises that the occupation is illegal under international law and realises that there are clear risks to economic and financial activities in the settlements. Yet talks with the Israeli government have not brought about any change in the status quo. That’s why a boycott and sanctions campaign is vital.



But the government is trying to prevent local councils from acting upon this in issuing their own contracts or operating their own pension funds. **Peter Chowney leader of Hastings Council who will be speaking at the meeting** says: “Councils have a duty to represent local people, and

take into account concerns about what suppliers and contractors we use, and whether they’re involved in activities that would be considered by many as unethical. **It should be free to councils to make decisions on the suppliers and contractors they use, as long as they aim to get good value for money. For the government to impose arbitrary restrictions on what they can and can't take into account when making those decisions seems completely unreasonable.”**

Hastings Palestine Solidarity Campaign
www.hastingspalestinecampaign.org

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RESISTING CENSORSHIP ON PALESTINE

Speakers: **Kiri Tunks** from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign national executive and also junior vice president of the National Union of Teachers (speaking in a personal capacity) and **Peter Chowney** leader of Hastings Council.

Thursday 19th May 19.00 (7 pm)

White Rock Hotel (opposite pier), Hastings TN34 1JU



Recently the government has paid much lip-service to the so-called British values of freedom of speech and expression. But when it comes to discussing peace in the middle east and social and economic justice in Palestine different rules apply. **Two** new legal devices aim to shut down debate on Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and stop the growing boycott of goods - a device that was so successful in ending Apartheid in South Africa.

THE “PREVENT” PROGRAMME: A THREAT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH